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# **The New West German Nationalism: Causes and Implications**

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**An Intelligence Assessment**

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*EUR 84-10141  
July 1984*

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# **The New West German Nationalism: Causes and Implications**

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**An Intelligence Assessment**

This paper was prepared by [redacted]  
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**The New West German  
Nationalism: Causes  
and Implications**

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**Key Judgments***Information available  
as of 6 July 1984  
was used in this report.*

The West German Government is coming under growing domestic pressure to pursue "German interests" in its foreign and security policies. This pressure is the result of increased East-West tensions and changing popular perceptions of the two superpowers, as well as of social and generational changes. The effects, exacerbated by the INF debate, have been most apparent in the Kohl government's active intra-German policy, its demand that all prospects for arms control and East-West dialogue be explored, and its efforts to promote greater European integration.

Despite this new assertiveness and a deepening of neutralist sentiment, we do not believe there is any significant movement under way now toward withdrawal from NATO. The leadership of the governing parties and the Social Democratic opposition firmly endorse NATO membership. Indeed, polls suggest most West Germans believe their government should assert its sovereignty within the Alliance, seeking a role there equivalent to that of the United Kingdom and France.

At the same time, we sense a greater public dissatisfaction with West Germany's perceived lack of control over its destiny and with its uncertain national identity—both the result of its continuing status as part of a defeated and divided nation along the border between East and West. With most polls showing about one-third of the general population, and a much higher proportion of younger West Germans, sympathetic toward neutralism, there is some serious question about West Germany's longer term reliability as an ally. Some of the Kohl government's new assertiveness and patriotic rhetoric is designed to prevent the transformation of these sentiments into an active political movement. Specifically, the government hopes to create a greater identification with Western Europe by promoting closer European cooperation and to demonstrate that promotion of intra-German relations is compatible with membership in NATO.

The Kohl government's intra-German policy is aimed above all at keeping open the longer term prospect for reunification by promoting cross-border contacts and sustaining a sense of national awareness, especially on the part of younger Germans. Few West Germans expect reunification any time soon, and the Kohl government is determined that nothing it does in the intra-German field will lessen its commitment to the West. Still, Bonn's high political stake in the intra-German relationship raises the cost of breaking it off and increases the risk that it will eclipse or conflict with some policy goals of higher priority to NATO Allies.

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We believe the new assertiveness reflects underlying changes in German society. Some changes—such as the heightened concern about West Germany's limited sovereignty evident in the long INF debate—may not be permanent and could wane with an improvement in East-West relations. Others, rooted in more permanent factors and societal changes, include West Germany's increasing real national power relative to its neighbors and the coming of age of generations with less understanding of the constraints that have governed West Germany's international behavior until now.

West Germany's belated readiness to be assertive in pursuing its perceived national interests could be healthy. It could help root West Germany even more firmly in the West, depending on how the Allies react to accepting the Germans as an equal partner and the extent to which Washington, London, and Paris accommodate Bonn's motives, interests, and fears.

Over the longer term, however, West Germany will remain subject to strong and conflicting pressures that will affect its fidelity to the Western Alliance. This fidelity could weaken whenever West Germany feels isolated from its Western partners or if the Allies are seen as wanting to perpetuate West Germany's postwar subservience. Moreover, the Soviet Union, which holds a fundamental key to the solution of the "German problem," will continue to give top priority to undermining West German loyalty to NATO. Although even an alienated West Germany is not likely to turn to the East, it could well enter a period of domestic political realignment that would leave governments in Bonn less decisive and predictable.

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## The New West German Nationalism: Causes and Implications

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### Introduction

Forces of change are at work in West Germany that could have substantial implications—positive and/or negative—for NATO and the United States. Observers of the German scene differ sharply in their views of what is going on. Some see leftist neutralism as the wave of the future, while others—pointing to polls showing continued strong support for NATO membership—argue that little is changing and there is nothing to worry about. Reality almost certainly lies somewhere in between. West Germans definitely are becoming more assertive, or “nationalistic.” And the Kohl government’s patriotic rhetoric and aggressive pursuit of improved intra-German relations have increased concerns about the extent to which the Allies can count on Bonn in the future.

This assessment presents our preliminary views on the causes and implications of the new German assertiveness. It is intended both to alert and to spark further discussion of this significant issue.

### German Nationalism: Old and New

The specter of German nationalism still haunts many people inside and outside Germany. West Germans since 1945 have accepted that the pathological nationalism of the Nazi era was responsible for the destruction of Germany’s cities, the end of the national unity Germany belatedly and painfully acquired in 1871, the loss of Germany’s sovereignty, and Germany’s occasional treatment—subtle and otherwise—as an international pariah. West Germany’s educated public and governing elite remain sensitive to the fact that both Western partners and neighbors to the East begin to worry at each hint that the “German disease” is recurring.

In our view, the national assertiveness that is increasingly visible now in West Germany is not the brand of nationalism that existed before and during the First and Second World Wars. Except for increased incidents of violence against foreign workers, nationally focused emotions have not produced a significant

resurgence of political extremism either on the right or left. The new nationalism does not espouse racist or religious views, nor does it aim to extend Germany’s borders through use of military force. For much of the political spectrum, it does not even posit German reunification as a realistically achievable goal. Few West Germans publicly advocate reunification of all Germans in Central and Eastern Europe; most acknowledge that even a more limited reunification of East and West Germany within their present geographic boundaries is hardly achievable.

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### Three Types

The new nationalism is not a unified phenomenon. We see three distinct elements, each with a different set of constituencies. All three elements, however, raise issues of independence and sovereignty, convey some degree of distance from the United States, and emphasize German interests—mainly relating to East Germany—that the United States is perceived as not sharing.

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**Neutralist Nationalism: Support for a Neutral Germany in Central Europe.** Proponents of neutralism generally argue that West Germany should withdraw from NATO and that all nuclear weapons and foreign troops should be removed from German soil. Some see a reunited, neutral Germany; others advocate a neutral status for the Federal Republic alone, if necessary. The underlying assumption is that a neutral Germany would improve prospects for reunification and make a war on German soil less likely. Some West German peace movement activists, including elements of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), have sought to make common cause with counterparts in East Germany. For example, these activists heralded their common opposition to INF deployments as a unifying force between the two Germans.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The perception that opposition to INF could serve as a unifying force led a group of West German leftists and East German nonconformists in the fall of 1981 to draft a joint letter to Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev on behalf of a neutral, united Germany. The letter was widely publicized as a unique step in cooperation between political minorities in the two Germans. The East and West Germans were drawn by the unifying notion of common or shared vulnerability in a great-power conflict.

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*Figure 1. Social Democrat Oskar Lafontaine and His Book Fear of the Friends. In this book published last summer, Lafontaine claimed that the nuclear strategy of the superpowers was undermining the basis for existing alliance systems, and he advocated West Germany's withdrawal from NATO's military wing.*



Der Spiegel ©

From the standpoint of influencing West German policy, this form of nationalism—loosely called leftist or neutralist nationalism—is, in our view, the weakest of the three. Polls indicate it is advocated in its purest form—West Germany's immediate, unilateral, and unconditional withdrawal from NATO—by a relatively small minority almost entirely on the left of the political spectrum. Some elements of the politically insignificant neo-Nazi rightist fringe also advocate this viewpoint.

Many proponents of neutralism in a broader and more theoretical sense appear to be German intellectuals; German intellectualism traditionally has included a strong strain of idealism. The antinuclear Green Party, which won seats in the Bundestag for the first time in the national election of March 1983, appears to be particularly influenced by this sentiment. Its national congress this March was held under the

slogan "Peace treaty, nonalignment, neutrality—outlook for a policy of peace."<sup>2</sup> Still, to the extent that Green positions have had an impact on policy, it has been more on environmental than security issues. We also believe that the party's continued electoral successes at the state level can be attributed more to public concerns about the environment than a desire for a neutralist foreign policy course.

<sup>2</sup> The position of the Greens on NATO appears to have changed during the past year but still remains unclear. The Greens originally favored dissolution of NATO and the Warsaw Pact as a long-term goal following achievement of an East-West accord. At their most recent national congress, however, the Greens adopted a motion calling for West Germany's withdrawal from NATO, apparently without tying it to dissolution of the pacts. An EMNID poll in late 1983 indicated that, given a choice between NATO membership and neutralism, a considerable minority of Green supporters—37 percent—favored NATO membership and 59 percent favored neutralism.

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**Table 1**  
**Deploy or Withdraw From NATO?**

*Percent*

"Assume we only have a choice of withdrawing from NATO or installing the new American missiles. What should we do: Withdraw from NATO or install the missiles?"

	Total Voter Popula- tion	Selected Voter Groups			
		CDU/ CSU	SPD	FDP	Green
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>
Install the new missiles	46	64	34	60	11
Withdraw from NATO	22	9	30	13	73
Do not know	32	27	36	27	16

Source: Allensbach, August 1983.

Although some of the SPD rank and file certainly are sympathetic to neutralism, the SPD leadership, despite its recent leftward drift, continues to insist that West Germany belongs in the community of Western nations. The SPD resolution on security issues passed at the party's congress in Essen in May reaffirms this general commitment, although other aspects of the resolution clearly run contrary to established NATO positions. Moreover, the SPD—like the Kohl government—agrees that reunification can take place only within the context of a vaguely defined "European peace order." The furthest any high-level SPD figure has gone in advocating a change in West Germany's status in NATO was the call of Saarbruecken mayor and SPD executive committee member Oskar Lafontaine last summer for a unilateral withdrawal from NATO's military wing. Lafontaine, however, was criticized by most party officials. Nevertheless, SPD rank-and-file frustrations sometimes manifest themselves in an ambivalence toward NATO. For example, an Allensbach poll conducted at the height of the INF controversy showed Social Democratic voters split almost evenly when asked their preference if forced at that moment to choose between deploying INF and withdrawing from NATO (see table 1).

Poll results on neutralism vary greatly depending on how the questions are worded:

- All recent polls indicate that a substantial proportion of West Germans—30 to 40 percent—remain receptive to neutralist appeals.
- Some polls indicate that among the population at large, however, support for neutrality as an alternative to NATO was higher in the early 1960s than in the 1980s.<sup>4</sup>
- EMNID polls conducted in 1980 and late 1983 showed a slight decline in neutralist sentiment—from 34 to 32 percent—despite the ongoing INF debate. The question was worded in terms of support for "membership in the Western defense alliance" or, alternatively, support for "neutralism."
- Other polls show increasing support for a neutral, reunified Germany, provided its social system could be determined in free and secret elections. A 1981 Allensbach poll (see table 2) showed that 53 percent would support neutralism under these conditions. These results suggest continued strong support for reunification, but at the same time a strong attachment to Western values.

In general, analysis of polling results indicates that support for a neutralist option grows when the alternative is posed as "alliance with the United States" rather than "alliance with NATO" or "alliance with other Western states." We believe West Germans favor the collective concept because it seems more clearly defensive rather than offensive in nature and less subordinate to the United States. The wording of the Allensbach polls in table 2 also suggests support for neutralism will increase if favorable conditions are included, the issue is clearly hypothetical, and no mention is made of Western security needs.

<sup>4</sup> Allensbach polls taken between 1961 and 1981 showed fluctuations in those favoring neutrality over "military alliance with the Americans": 1961—42 percent; 1965—37 percent; 1969—38 percent; 1973—42 percent; 1981—31 percent.

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**Table 2**  
**Neutralism and Reunification** Percent

Question: "What do you think about the following proposal for German reunification? Conditions for reunification are the following:

- East Germany withdraws from the Warsaw Pact and West Germany from NATO.
- The reunified Germany is to be neutral and not become a member of either alliance.
- The reunified Germany can determine its social system in free and secret elections.

Would you welcome, or not welcome, German reunification under these conditions?"

	1978 (Septem- ber)	1979 (May)	1980 (June)	1981 (May)	1981 (Sep- tember)
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Welcome	38	49	47	54	53
Not welcome	34	26	27	24	20
Undecided	28	25	26	22	27

Source: Allensbach.

Although sentiment favoring reunification is real, we believe its intensity remains low among the population as a whole. Responses to questions on neutralism often appear to reflect a mood rather than a driving political force.<sup>5</sup> However, close analysis of the EMNID poll conducted in late 1983 (see inset, "The Demographics of Neutralism") raises considerably more serious questions about West Germany's reliability as an ally in the longer term. In marked contrast to other segments of the population, the majority of West Germans under 20 prefer neutralism to NATO membership while those in their twenties are evenly split on the issue. Chancellor Helmut Kohl views this as an urgent problem, and the government's assertiveness and patriotic rhetoric in part are designed to defuse these sentiments among the young.

<sup>5</sup> The ambivalence and confusion of attitudes on neutralism is indicated clearly by an EMNID poll conducted in the fall of 1981. In typical fashion, those surveyed at that time opted against neutralism by a 63- to 35-percent margin. EMNID then asked those who favored neutralism how they would regard the departure of US troops from West Germany. Surprisingly, the largest group—39 percent—would "regret" the departure of American troops. Thirty-seven percent of "neutralists" were "indifferent" whether the troops remained or left. Only 24 percent of "neutralists" said they would "welcome" the departure of American troops.

**"German Interests": Support for a More Activist and, if Necessary, Independent West German Role.**<sup>6</sup> In many ways, this sentiment, loosely defined as *nationalistic*, is a return to a pattern of behavior characteristic of most states. Long after recovering from their defeat in World War II, the West Germans were reluctant to assert themselves and appeared content to play the role of "economic giant" while remaining a "political dwarf." Clearly this is no longer true.

We believe that this strain of nationalism—the desire for Bonn to be more assertive in advancing "German interests" (see inset, "What Are 'German Interests?'" )—is the most broad-based nationalistic phenomenon in West Germany today. Its proponents cover the entire political spectrum from left to right. Those who press for a neutral Germany also advocate this sort of assertiveness as do those—including Kohl, SPD Chairman Willy Brandt, Free Democratic Party (FDP) Chairman Hans-Dietrich Genscher, former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, and CSU Chairman Franz Josef Strauss—who urge increased European security cooperation as a means to strengthen Western Europe's voice in the Alliance. This group also includes leaders such as Strauss—as well as Kohl—who argue that West Germany should be listened to because it has proved its loyalty to the Alliance and no longer should be punished for the Second World War. Indeed, the public rhetoric across the political spectrum defining West Germany's role in the Alliance—and public expectations of how Bonn governments should act—would have been unimaginable only 10 years ago.

Opinion polls are not helpful in understanding this form of nationalism. For example, one poll conducted in 1982 showed that, when asked directly but in general terms, only 24.7 percent believed West Germany should play a more active international role. Other polls, however, indicate strong public support for an active intra-German policy and *Ostpolitik*, thereby implying a more assertive international role.

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### ***The Demographics of Neutralism***

*A poll conducted in December 1983 by the EMNID Institute showed that West Germans favored NATO membership over neutralism by 64 to 32 percent. Four percent did not respond. Demographically, with a few exceptions—most notably generational differences—support for NATO was in the 60- to 70-percent range.* [ ]

**Age Group.** *The poll showed sharp generational differences in support for neutralism. West Germans in the 30-to-49 and 50-to-64 age brackets preferred NATO membership by an overwhelming 3-to-1 margin. Younger West Germans showed marked neutralist tendencies. The 20-to-29 age bracket only narrowly preferred NATO membership (46 to 44 percent), while a majority in the category 19 and younger preferred neutralism to NATO (52 to 48 percent). The ratio of support for NATO over neutralism also declines to 2 to 1 among those 65 and older who are old enough to recall the period when Germany was united.* [ ]

**Party Preferences.** *Not surprisingly, supporters of the CDU/CSU favored NATO over neutralism by a wide 79- to-18 percent margin. FDP support for NATO—at 65 percent—paralleled the national average, while support for neutralism—at 34 percent—was slightly above the average. SPD voters favored NATO membership by a 57- to-39 percent margin, while the Greens' preference was reversed by a 59- to-37 percent margin.* [ ]

**Religion.** *Religion does not appear to be a factor in determining support for neutralism. Catholics were only slightly more supportive of neutralism than Protestants (34 versus 30 percent).* [ ]

**Regional Differences.** *The two conservative and relatively prosperous southern states—Baden-Wuerttemberg and Bavaria—prefer NATO by a strong 3-to-1 margin. North Rhine-Westphalia supported NATO by a 63-to-34 percent margin—near the national average. North Rhine-Westphalia is West Germany's most populous state, is heavily industrialized and unionized, and is an SPD stronghold. Support for neutralism is only slightly higher in Hesse (36 percent)—also governed by the Social Democrats—and in West Germany's three city states, Hamburg, Bremen, and West Berlin (37 percent). The poll shows, in general, that support for neutralism is higher in cities with populations of more than 100,000. One anomaly in the survey was that citizens of Rhineland-Palatinate and the Saar (they apparently were polled as one unit) preferred neutralism to NATO by 51 to 45 percent. We cannot account for this discrepancy. Rhineland-Palatinate has one of the highest concentrations of US forces of any state, but also is a CDU stronghold. Hesse and Baden-Wuerttemberg also have a large US military presence, but, according to the same poll, strongly support NATO. The sparsely populated Saar is experiencing serious economic difficulties, and the present CDU-FDP government probably will be replaced next year by the SPD.* [ ]

**Level of Education.** *Education does not appear to be a significant factor in explaining neutralist sentiment. West Germans with a higher level of education (completed Abitur or university degree) are only slightly more supportive of neutralism (35 percent) than the national average.* [ ]

In any case, the Kohl government's rhetoric and actions indicate to us it feels compelled to respond to opposition charges that it is a stooge of Washington and has not been doing enough to bring the two superpowers toward an arms control agreement. [ ]

**A Renewed Emphasis on "Germany."** *The Social Democrats generally avoided nationalistic rhetoric during their long tenure in power. Although they were assertive in describing West Germany's role between the superpowers, the Social Democrats avoided talk of*

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**What Are "German Interests"?**

*The term "German interests" is heard increasingly in West Germany. Until recent years it was widely assumed—or at least not publicly contradicted—that NATO serves German interests. During the 1983 national election campaign, however, the SPD began to discuss German interests in a manner strongly implying that they are not always served by West German membership in NATO or close association with the United States, and certainly not by the dual-track decision on INF. The SPD ever since has accused the Kohl government of not protecting German interests, and the Kohl government has felt itself under pressure to prove otherwise.*

*Despite the lack of a clear definition of what German interests are, we believe the West German view of national interests can be inferred from public statements by leaders of the major parties. They stem in part from West Germany's economic and political structure, as well as its unique geographic position on the border between East and West. We believe these perceived interests include:*

- *Protecting and maintaining West Germany's democratic way of life and territorial integrity.*
- *Preventing the outbreak of conventional or nuclear war in Central Europe, either of which could devastate West Germany.*

- *Promoting and exploiting an open international economy, because West Germany is heavily dependent on imported raw materials and on external markets for its products.*
- *Moving toward or, at least, keeping open the ultimate goal of German reunification by working toward improved intra-German relations and human contacts and by not yielding on Berlin.*
- *Pursuing a political dialogue and economic relations with Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, with an eye to maintaining detente.*

*We believe there is broad agreement among the major parties on what constitutes German interests and that pursuit of these interests often involves style as much as substance. In other words, to pursue German interests successfully one has to be perceived as being active on the international scene, no matter whether one is producing results. German interests are being successfully pursued if Germany is a focal point of world attention and its advice actively solicited by the superpowers. Even if the superpowers do not pay attention, German interests can be successfully pursued—from the standpoint of Social Democrats, at least—if Washington views Bonn as a nuisance when the West Germans disagree with US policy.*

*a reunified Germany—or statements that Germans no longer should feel guilty for Germany's past. Such rhetoric by the Social Democrats would have caused problems in relations with the East and, given the SPD's suspect NATO credentials especially during its last years in power, with its Allies in the West.*

*Kohl and the CDU/CSU consider themselves to be trusted in the West and not bound by the same constraints as the SPD. Since coming to power, the Christian Democrats have sought in their rhetoric to reemphasize the notion of the German "Fatherland." Kohl has reinstituted the tradition, discontinued while the Social Democrats were in power, of an annual speech to the Bundestag on the "State of the Nation in Divided Germany." Indeed, some of the Kohl*

*government's statements have been unusually provocative. For example, shortly after coming to power, Kohl accompanied British Prime Minister Thatcher to Berlin and stated that for Germans "Berlin is not just any other German state, but the heart of our Fatherland." During his visit to Moscow last July, Kohl complained to the Soviet leadership about the continued division of Germany and Berlin. More recently, Strauss proclaimed in a speech that "the Free State of Bavaria is our homeland, the Federal Republic is our just and democratic state, but Germany is our Fatherland." According to US officials in Munich, Strauss received a standing ovation when he added that it was "high time we stop apologizing to others for our existence."*

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**Table 3** Percent  
**National Pride**

Question: "Are you proud to be a German?"					
	1971	1975	1981	1982	1983
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Definitely	42	36	35	29	37
Generally	34	40	41	41	41
Generally not	7	6	8	10	9
Not at all	4	6	4	4	5
Undecided	13	12	12	16	8

Source: Allensbach.

Although few conservatives believe that reunification is likely in the near future, they remain committed to it as an ultimate goal. Many are worried by polls showing a declining interest in the issue among younger Germans. Current government leaders appear deeply concerned that this trend must be reversed if reunification is to be achieved at all in the longer term. Indeed, in his most recent "State of the Nation in Divided Germany" speech, Kohl emphasized that the "national question" should be dealt with in West German schools, and he appealed to parents, teachers, school administrators, and state-level officials to "contribute to the strengthening of national awareness." The Kohl government no doubt also hopes that a renewed emphasis on "Germany" will reverse a trend—especially pronounced among younger Germans—toward declining national pride (see tables 3 and 4). Moreover, by doing this, the government believes it reduces its vulnerability to charges it is not advancing "German interests."

For the time being, this notion of "Germany" will be emphasized in public primarily by neutralist nationalists and mainstream conservatives. The difference between the two is that the former wish to leave NATO, while the latter are partly motivated by a desire to maintain popular support for the Alliance. Although they share the Kohl government's concerns, the Social Democrats have not used similar patriotic rhetoric. Public comments by SPD leaders indicate

**Table 4** Percent  
**Degree of National Pride by Age Group, February 1983**

	16 to 29	30 to 44	45 to 59	60 and Over
Total	100	100	100	100
Definitely	23	33	41	50
Generally	43	42	40	40
Generally not	14	10	8	4
Not at all	8	5	3	1
Undecided	12	10	8	5

Source: Allensbach.

they think the conservatives' rhetoric sometimes damages prospects for improved relations with the East. Indeed, the Social Democrats have sought to exploit more extremist statements by conservatives questioning the permanence of the East German-Polish border, or advocating the rights of ethnic Germans in Eastern Europe, as a sign that some in the CDU/CSU are opposed to *Ostpolitik*.

**Causes of the New Nationalism**

We believe that West Germany's new nationalism and assertiveness stem from the West Germans' changing view of themselves, their role in the world, and prospects for eventual reunification.

**West Germany's Limited Sovereignty**

A strong dichotomy exists in West Germany's attitude toward its Western partners, especially the United States. On the one hand, the West Germans occasionally express resentment over real and perceived limitations on their sovereignty. On the other hand, they have been sensitive to the slightest indication that the West is abandoning them. For instance, although the West Germans by 1983 had come to view INF deployments as a burden, there probably

Figure 2. Peace Movement  
Demonstration Against De-  
ployment of INF in West Ger-  
many. [redacted]



Der Spiegel ©

would have been an outcry—especially among conservatives—that Western Europe was becoming decoupled from the US nuclear guarantee if NATO had suddenly given up on plans to deploy. [redacted]

West Germany's sovereignty is limited militarily and politically. Some restraints, such as forswearing nuclear arms, are self-imposed, but most are limited by international agreements. Moreover, Bonn's authority over Allied forces stationed in West Germany is incomplete, as is evidenced by periodic inquiries about the nature of weapons already deployed on West German territory. Some agreements still governing the activities and disposition of Allied forces were dictated to the West Germans before Bonn joined NATO. At the same time, West Germany perceives itself as bearing a disproportionate burden within the Alliance. As West German leaders never lose an occasion to point out, their territory, "the size of Oregon," includes 400,000 foreign troops, the highest concentration of nuclear weapons of any country, NATO's only stockpiles of chemical weapons in Europe, and a dense network of airbases and military installations. [redacted]

Most West Germans realize that their country's dependence on other powers for its security is unlikely to change any time soon. And most realize that West Germany will remain dependent on others because the alternatives are unattractive. For example, there still is almost no sentiment in West Germany favoring development of an independent nuclear deterrent, the only way most observers believe Bonn could effectively renounce dependence on others. Even though this dependent relationship partly derives from national preference, we believe that Bonn frequently feels at a disadvantage in bargaining with its Allies and that there is a widespread feeling of vulnerability and fear of being abandoned in a crunch. [redacted]

The dichotomy in West German thinking also is apparent in attitudes toward Berlin. Bonn views West Berlin as part of the Federal Republic, but at the same time it recognizes the authority of the three

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Western protecting powers. Bonn must coordinate almost all its activities regarding West Berlin with the Allies—a task we believe they must regard as demeaning on occasion. In the past, for example, Berlin governing mayors received lectures from the Allies on how to behave in meetings with East German officials, and the Allies laid down strict conditions in 1981 for West Berlin's participation in the Soviet gas project. [redacted]

At the same time, the Allied commitment to Berlin is of great symbolic and psychological importance because it helps reduce the West Germans' feelings of vulnerability and isolation. US presidential visits are especially important and are viewed as symbols of the Western commitment to defend Germany and support eventual German reunification.<sup>7</sup> Any hint of a Soviet threat against West Berlin drives the West Germans toward the United States. Indeed, Soviet appreciation of this fact is, we believe, one reason why in recent years Moscow generally has sought not to disrupt the status quo in Berlin. [redacted]

**Heightened Fears of War.** The lengthy INF debate, with its discussion about the dangers of nuclear war, strongly reinforced West German concerns about the limitations on their sovereignty and the degree to which dependence puts West Germany at risk. Although opinion surveys generally show a large majority of West Germans continuing to favor a US troop presence, one theme of the massive peace demonstration in October 1981 was that West Germany is an "occupied country." *Der Spiegel* magazine, which advocates a leftist neutralist nationalism, wrote in 1982 of a taboo against admitting that those who rule the country are not really sovereign over questions of war and peace. Egon Bahr, regarded as the SPD's leading expert on arms control, emphasized at a

<sup>7</sup> It is an interesting phenomenon that responsible politicians still regard it as politically imprudent to criticize US policies while top US officials are in Berlin reaffirming the American commitment to that city. For example, a major controversy erupted in September 1981 when the Young Socialists, the SPD's youth affiliate, decided to participate in demonstrations against US security policies during Secretary Haig's visit to Berlin. The Young Socialists' participation was criticized even by media elements normally favorable to the SPD. Genscher, who was looking for a good excuse to change coalition partners, also sought to play up the issue. We believe he could have—and probably intended to—use this issue to justify a switch in coalition partners. He was undercut, however, when one of the FDP's own youth affiliates also decided to participate in the demonstrations. [redacted]

Protestant church gathering in June 1983 that West Germany is not truly sovereign. This was a central point during the INF debate, and many in the peace movement even assert that Washington is forcing the new "American" missiles on the West Germans and other Europeans as part of a plan to limit any nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union to Western Europe. According to polls by the SINUS Institute, the number of West Germans seeing *both* the United States and the USSR as a danger to world peace increased from 20 percent in 1980 to 38 percent in 1983. [redacted] 25X1

The SPD's interest in removing nuclear and chemical weapons from the two Germanys reflects in part, we believe, a desire to increase West German control over dangers that the Social Democrats believe could emanate from the United States. But concerns that West Germany does not control its own destiny also increasingly are voiced by Christian Democrats. In a meeting with Ambassador Burns last December, moderate Christian Democrat Richard von Weizsaecker, who became Federal President on 1 July, stated that there is a perception among West Germans that too many missiles are being deployed on too little territory in their country. In a speech to the Bundestag in September 1982, von Weizsaecker spoke of the determining influence in Central Europe of "the two leading world powers" in contrast with the frequent "powerlessness among the Germans." As a variant of this theme, Strauss remarked last August that West Germany should share in any decision to fire US intermediate-range missiles stationed in West Germany. [redacted] 25X1

#### **West Germany's International Role**

West Germany's foreign policy perspective is becoming more complex, independent, and global. Until the early 1970s, Bonn's foreign policy was notable for its focus on strengthening and maintaining the Atlantic Alliance and promoting European integration. Since then, Bonn has pursued more actively improved relations with the East, as well as with the Third World. We believe that what has taken place has been not a lessening of Bonn's commitment to the West, or a

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move to a point somewhere between East and West, but rather an overall increase in West German readiness to exert its power in a broad array of international arenas. Less noticed during this latter period, for example, has been the simultaneous strengthening of West Germany's role in NATO and the European Community, as well as its support for other European integration initiatives such as coordinated defense planning under the Western European Union (WEU). Nonetheless, by 1980, West Germany had established itself as a particularly important actor in East-West relations and appeared to regard it as its duty to do all possible to maintain detente. [ ]

The rise in West Germany's international activity has been a function of its real economic power and its increased importance as a NATO power, as well as the emergence of an East-West detente during the 1970s that greatly enhanced West Germany's room for maneuver. There were other reasons as well, in our view, including:

- Declining confidence in Washington's leadership.
- A belief that a more independent foreign policy would not endanger crucial ties with the United States and its partners in the EC and NATO.<sup>8</sup>
- A belief that only West Germany has the incentive to advance "German interests," especially efforts to promote East-West German reconciliation. [ ]

The Social Democrats were extremely proud of their international role, particularly in the later years of their 13-year rule in coalition with the FDP. Schmidt came to see himself as an "interpreter" between the United States and USSR, and the SPD regarded itself as having significant influence with both superpowers. To some extent, the West Germans *were* successful. In 1980, for example, Schmidt took credit for convincing Moscow to give up its demand that INF negotiations could not begin until NATO renounced its 1979 dual-track decision. A year later, Schmidt took some credit for persuading Washington

<sup>8</sup> There still are limits to what the West Germans will do internationally. Politicians in all major parties interpret the Basic Law (constitution) as prohibiting West German military activity outside the NATO area. Because of their reliance on the US nuclear guarantee and on the United States, France, and the United Kingdom for the security of Berlin, West German governments have been reluctant to criticize their Allies publicly. Even today, when Bonn has a choice, it prefers to hide behind its European partners rather than take the lead in disputes with the United States. [ ]



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**Figure 3. Former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.**  
*West Germany's international prestige and influence expanded greatly during his period in office from 1974 to 1982. (C NF)*

to adopt the "zero-option" as its negotiating position in the Geneva INF talks, and some in the SPD justified their refusal to accept "automatic" deployments as a device to put pressure on *both* superpowers to reach an agreement. The SPD also played a significant behind-the-scenes role in the successful transitions to democracy in Spain and Portugal in the 1970s. Brandt's public statement that Portugal is democratic today because he "didn't give up on it after the United States had" typifies the SPD's confidence—a confidence that can sometimes cross the line into arrogance—that it understands international issues at least as well as the United States. Former Defense Minister Hans Apel once cautioned his fellow Social Democrats against acting as if there are three superpowers—"the United States, the Soviet Union, and the SPD." [ ]

One factor causing divisions in the SPD to surface and lead to the party's agonizingly long departure from power was the deterioration in East-West relations following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan,



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Soviet threats to Poland, and NATO's INF modernization decision. Simple power realities suggested that West Germany's room for maneuver would become more limited under these circumstances, yet the Social Democrats—reluctant to accept this—blamed the United States for the deterioration in international relations. The fact that they remained in power, and therefore theoretically remained capable of preventing INF deployments in West Germany, increased Moscow's stake in courting the SPD. And Moscow's conciliatory talks with SPD leaders encouraged the party to overestimate its role as a mediator between East and West. [REDACTED]

The SPD left a heritage. When the Christian Democrats came to power in October 1982, they felt compelled to demonstrate that they too could maintain a dialogue with the Soviets and were not subservient to Washington. Indeed, Kohl at one point spoke of an "equal partnership" between West Germany and the United States; Schmidt and Genscher, by contrast, had never spoken of more than a partnership between the United States and Western Europe.<sup>9</sup>

West Germany's improved standing has—at least for the immediate future—changed beliefs in West Germany about the role Bonn can and should play between the great powers. In particular, fear of the Soviet Union declined as West German leaders in all parties came to perceive Soviet vulnerabilities, especially in the economic sphere. Their public and private statements indicate that trust in and admiration of the United States also fell as West German leaders came increasingly to see weaknesses in US judgment, consistency, and effectiveness. Public opinion polls indicate these sentiments have been accepted by the public at large. [REDACTED]

<sup>9</sup> These perceptions of West Germany's role between the superpowers were very evident during last November's Bundestag debate on INF. On the one hand, Schmidt justified his refusal to support the government's position on INF because of Kohl's alleged failure to put adequate pressure on the two superpowers to accept an INF arms control agreement based on the "walk in the woods" formula. Representatives of the Kohl government countered that Bonn's influence in Washington had increased because it is perceived as a reliable ally. Indeed, Defense Minister Manfred Woerner enumerated the large number of high-level meetings between US and West German officials since Kohl had come to power. He also pointed out that Washington had modified its negotiating position several times while the Christian Democrats were in power, whereas it had stuck to the "zero option" while the Social Democrats were in power. [REDACTED]

Increased tension between Washington and Moscow is hard for the West Germans to come to terms with because detente has become a cornerstone of West Germany's political philosophy. West Germans continue to believe that detente has won the general acceptance of most West Europeans, as well as the endorsement of NATO.<sup>10</sup> Increased tensions have tended to frustrate West German ambitions to promote East-West relationships in which German national interests—both political and economic—could prosper. [REDACTED]

#### Interest in Reunification

The Basic Law (constitution) of the Federal Republic of Germany legally binds the West German Government to pursue reunification. The Basic Law itself is officially viewed as a transitory document, to be replaced once reunification has been achieved. The Federal Republic maintains that all Germans are entitled to West German citizenship; East German citizenship and sovereignty are not formally acknowledged. Indeed, a major goal in East Germany's relations with Bonn is to gain full acceptance of East Germany's legitimacy. The East Germans constantly press Bonn to acknowledge East German citizenship, as well as to upgrade their respective permanent representations in East Berlin and Bonn to embassies. [REDACTED]

The CDU/CSU, FDP, and SPD agree broadly on the most important aspects of the "German question":

- Bonn must refuse to recognize East German citizenship or raise the level of bilateral diplomatic representation.
- At the same time, Bonn must respect the Eastern treaties of the 1970s, which normalized relations between Bonn and Eastern Europe and ruled out the use of force to change postwar boundaries.

<sup>10</sup> The 1967 Harmel Report, named after the Belgian Foreign Minister, defined the NATO Alliance's objectives as both the maintenance of a military balance and the pursuit of East-West detente. The West Germans were the main movers behind last December's "Brussels Declaration" by NATO, which reaffirmed these objectives. [REDACTED]

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**Figure 4. Symbol of Improved Intra-German Relations. Chancellor Kohl and East German leader Honecker meet in Moscow on the occasion of Soviet President Andropov's funeral.**



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- Although reunification is unlikely any time soon, all efforts must be made in the meantime to improve the living conditions of East Germans and to promote human contacts and travel between the two Germanys.
- Reunification, when it does come, must be peaceful and based on self-determination.
- Ties between the Federal Republic and West Berlin should be strengthened as provided for in the 1971 Quadripartite Agreement among the four occupying powers.

This consensus has been evident in endorsements by key SPD figures, including Schmidt and Bahr, of the Kohl government's efforts to promote East-West German reconciliation. On 9 February, the Bundestag passed a resolution in which all parties except the Greens confirmed the basis for Bonn's German policy.<sup>11</sup> [redacted]

<sup>11</sup> The first paragraph of the resolution read: "Our country is divided, but the German nation continues to exist. We are not strong enough to change this situation. But we must make it more bearable. The only way to change it will be to create a permanent peace order in Europe." [redacted]

Despite this overall consensus—or perhaps as a result of it—the major parties recently have begun to compete with each other over which is most effectively promoting intra-German relations. The Social Democrats, who in the past gained electorally because they were seen as architects of the *Ostpolitik*, unexpectedly have found themselves outmaneuvered by the Christian Democrats. To date, intra-German relations have avoided the "ice age" promised by the East once West Germany began INF deployments. There has been a flood of West German visitors of all parties to East Germany since last year, and a visit to West Germany by East German leader Erich Honecker later this year is planned. The East Germans also have been unusually cooperative in several difficult asylum cases, and in the early months of 1984 East Berlin permitted emigration to West Germany at a rate higher than any since construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In early May, it became clear that the East Germans were reducing the emigration outflow, and Bonn officially protested East German harassment of visitors to the West German permanent representation in East Berlin. Still, both sides emphasized their desire that overall bilateral relations not be disrupted. Bonn had expected all along that the emigration wave would have to be curtailed. [redacted]

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**Table 5** Percent  
**West Germans Satisfied With**  
**Present Conditions**

Question: "When do you believe things have gone best for Germany during the 20th century?"

	1951	1959	1963	1970	1980
Total	100	100	100	100	100
The present	2	42	63	81	80
1933-39 (pre-WW II Nazi period)	42	18	10	5	3
1920-32 (Weimar period)	7	4	5	2	2
Before 1914 (the monarchy)	45	28	16	5	4
Do not know	4	8	6	7	11

Source: Allensbach.

The West Germans, for their part, appear ready to provide additional loans to East Germany, and Western bankers generally assume that West Germany's financial umbrella over East Germany makes the latter a safe lending risk.

**Adopting a National Identity.** West Germans are loyal both to the Federal Republic and to a larger German nation. All signs suggest that West Germans have accepted the Federal Republic as their state and are in the main satisfied with it. Eighty percent of respondents to an Allensbach poll in 1980 said "things have gone better" for Germany now than at any previous time in this century (see table 5). Another poll conducted in 1980 showed over 95-percent approval of the West German political system. A series of Allensbach poll results indicates that many West Germans have come to perceive their country as "Germany."<sup>13</sup> Polls also show very little sympathy for the East German regime and for Communism in general.

<sup>13</sup> Allensbach polls since 1972 show that a third of all West Germans and the majority of young people prefer to call their country "Germany." In sports events, for example, "Germany" plays the "DDR" (East Germany).

Other poll results can, however, be read as meaning that West German national awareness and responsibility include the Germans in the East. An INFAS poll of 1978 showed 44 percent considered Germans in East and West as members of one nation; 41 percent did not.<sup>14</sup> Allensbach surveys of the past 10 years have shown reunification as receiving continued support but low in priority. These polls also show that younger West Germans care less than their elders about German unity (see table 6).

**Political and Psychological Significance of Intra-German Relations.** Polls indicate that West Germans place an extremely high—and increasing—priority on improved intra-German relations. For example, according to a SINUS Institute poll conducted in August/September 1983, 86 percent of West Germans believed that increased tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union should not stand in the way of Bonn continuing talks and seeking agreements between East and West Germany. This represented an increase over similar surveys conducted in 1981 and 1982 (see table 7). The same survey indicated that, by 1983, only 14 percent believed that relations between West Germany and the United States within the NATO framework should take precedence over talks with the East Germans in the event of increased superpower tensions. The survey also showed that between 70 and 85 percent of the West German public believes that regular meetings between West and East German officials, increased youth exchanges and sports events between the two countries, and joint church conferences could lead to improved relations.

The most tangible reason for public interest in improved intra-German relations, especially in the humanitarian field, is the number of West Germans

<sup>14</sup> INFAS concluded, however, that there is obviously some confusion about what is meant by a "nation." The same poll indicated that 73 percent do not regard East Germany as a foreign country. Significant generational differences also were apparent on this question: 59 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds did not regard East Germany as a foreign country in contrast to 82 percent in the over-64 category.

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**Table 6**  
**German Sentiment**  
**About Reunification**

Percent

"Do you want reunification very much, or is it not too important to you?"

	Want Very Much	Not Important	No Answer
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Age</b>			
16 to 29	44	50	6
30 to 44	56	37	7
45 to 59	73	20	7
60 and older	76	18	6
<b>Relatives or friends in East Germany</b>			
Yes, have some	74	19	7
No, have none	54	40	6
<b>Political orientation</b>			
CDU/CSU	72	23	5
SPD	64	31	5
FDP	54	46	
Green Party	35	53	12

"Do you think that East and West Germany will ever reunite, or not?"

	Believe They Will	Do Not Think They Will	Cannot Say
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Age</b>			
16 to 29	7	69	24
30 to 44	11	67	22
45 to 59	14	60	26
60 and older	21	52	27
<b>Relatives or friends in East Germany</b>			
Yes, have some	17	65	18
No, have none	11	61	28
<b>Political orientation</b>			
CDU/CSU	16	57	27
SPD	10	64	26
FDP	17	71	12
Green Party	3	79	18

Source: Allensbach, July 1981.

**Table 7**  
**Talks With East Germany**

Percent

Question: "Relations between East and West Germany are also dependent on relations between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union. How do you think the Federal Republic of Germany should behave if tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union increase?"

"On this list are two different opinions. Which is closer to your own?"

	1981	1982	1983
A. Even if relations between the United States and the Soviet Union should lead to increased tensions, the federal government should continue to stay in touch with East Germany and attempt to conclude agreements between the two German states.	72	72	86
B. The federal government cannot continue negotiations with East Germany or conclude agreements if tensions between the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, increase. In that situation, relations between West Germany and the United States within the NATO framework take precedence.	26	27	14

Source: SINUS Institute, August/September 1983.

with relatives in the East.

However, we believe the pursuit of improved intra-German relations remains important to younger West Germans as well for less tangible and definable reasons. We believe the psychological reasons for this

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Figure 5. First Success of Chancellor Brandt's Ostpolitik. Signature of the Moscow accords in 1970.



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stem from a desire to find an identity and to reduce feelings of isolation during a period when European integration appears to be faltering. East-West tensions are high, and doubts exist about whether NATO serves "German interests." Indeed, some young people may see an active intra-German policy as a way to reduce support for NATO by provoking West Germany's Allies—thereby demonstrating to the public that the Alliance does not serve "German interests." For example, *Der Spiegel* created a small furor when it incorrectly reported last fall that Ambassador Burns had intervened with the Kohl government against guaranteeing any new credits to East Germany. We believe the Kohl government, on the other hand, hopes to use its active intra-German policy to demonstrate both that it is pursuing "German interests" and that the Alliance supports the notion of improved intra-German relations—and eventual German reunification.

#### Government Tactics Regarding Nationalism

Throughout the postwar period, West German governments have sought actively to prevent either a rebirth of the nationalism that led to Germany's defeat and division or the emergence of a neutralist nationalism that could weaken NATO. Concentration

on individual welfare, on an anti-Communist, anti-Soviet ideology, and on aspirations to build European institutions helped Bonn's early governments to divert national frustrations concerning West Germany's limited status. Moreover, the United States was idealized as a model society, and West Germans were grateful for America's contribution to West German reconstruction.

These factors began to lose their effectiveness in the 1960s. Economic prosperity met its first checks, de Gaulle placed French nationalism in the way of supranational institutions in Western Europe, and the US Government increasingly insisted on the need to explore possibilities of detente. Subsequently, US involvement in Vietnam raised questions in West Germany about the United States and its global role, while the detente of the 1970s changed West German views of Soviet motivations. The resulting shifts of policy intensified differences of opinion in West Germany and set the scene for current uncertainty.

Solutions to West German national aspirations through partnership with the United States continue simultaneously to attract the West Germans and to

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### ***Changing Positions of the CDU/CSU and SPD on National Issues***

*The renewed preoccupation with national issues can be clearly seen in the way the major parties coped with the "Germany" question over the past several years. As the SPD-FDP governing coalition moved into the 1980s, a form of leftist nationalism gained strength in the SPD, while conservative forces grew dominant in the FDP. When the CDU/CSU entered the government in 1982, it had to take responsibility for the conduct of relations with the East—an issue on which it had not been able to agree internally since Willy Brandt challenged Konrad Adenauer's policies in the 1960s.*

*The SPD's internationalist and pacifist traditions had made it suspect to nationalists throughout its prewar history. Partly in reaction, and partly because its roots were particularly strong in what is now East Germany, in the postwar period it became the party in West Germany that most emphasized all-German identity and West German sovereignty in relation to its allies. On the other hand, Adenauer's CDU/CSU, successor primarily to the prewar Catholic Center Party, represented the traditionally "national" middle class and peasantry. Partly in reaction to this heritage, it became the party that most emphasized commitment to the West and to multinational organizations. Adenauer—whose views prevailed in the CDU/CSU—maintained that reunification could most likely be achieved through military alliance with the West.*

*Both parties modified their positions over time. Following West Germany's acceptance of NATO membership, the CDU/CSU became loudest in demanding German reunification and in insisting that Germans in the East be able to claim West German citizenship. Beginning in the 1960s, the SPD deemphasized reunification in order to permit reconciliation with the governments in Eastern Europe and to promote contact with East Germans. A July 1981 Allensbach poll (see table 6) showed that fewer SPD than CDU/CSU supporters cared greatly about reunification, or believed reunification would ever come about.*

*Brandt's Eastern policy was driven emotionally by resentment of what he and his associates charged were fundamental hypocrisies of CDU/CSU governments and of the United States. Adenauer and other conservative leaders, in Brandt's view, demanded reunification of Germany because they knew it could not be achieved on terms West Germany could accept. Brandt saw the demand as a way of evading any real opportunities for changing relationships with East Germany. He claimed that, although the United States supported German unity in theory and word, Washington wanted to maintain ties between the Germans in East and West only to the extent necessary for maintaining West Germany's reliability in the Alliance.*

*Current SPD Stance.* The present attitudes of key SPD figures such as Brandt and Egon Bahr were deeply influenced by the 1961 Berlin crisis. We think Brandt and some others still privately suspect some US-Soviet complicity in constructing the Berlin Wall. Advocates of a neutralist nationalism periodically have tried to prove that this was the case.

*The SPD set the pace for West Germany's greater assertiveness during its years in power. The party was emotionally committed to its Eastern policy and was especially distressed by the increase of East-West tensions. Party functionaries at lower levels have come increasingly to support neutralism and anti-Americanism. After the party left government in 1982 and lost the election in 1983, the functionaries felt freer to express their emotions and disregard pragmatic considerations.*

*The increasing influence of neutralist nationalism in the SPD has raised the question of whether the party will reject NATO membership and either return to power in a few years under demagogic, neutralist leadership or lose credibility as a persuasive alternative to the CDU/CSU government. In the SPD's executive committee, anti-NATO views still are in a*

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*small minority. We believe the SPD is much more likely to explore changes of relations and strategies within NATO than to advocate or permit ending the Alliance.* [ ]

**Kohl's Perspective.** *The CDU/CSU has quarreled internally for almost 20 years over policies toward the East. Chancellor Ludwig Erhard fell from power in 1966 in part because a strong faction of his party perceived him to have subordinated West German interests to those of the United States. Opinion regarding relations with the East was divided between those who wanted to keep up a consistent anti-Communist posture and those who wanted to explore possibilities for detente. Arguments for detente drew partly on a conviction that trade and credit could change political relations between East and West. Disunity over this issue remains a factor of discord in the Kohl administration. As of last fall, Kohl was criticized by both sides: on the one hand for his accommodation of US policies on East-West relations, and on the other for his economic concessions to the East Germans.* [ ]

*Kohl contends that he wants to place West German emotions about the nation in a context that is constructive to Western interests. His stated intentions include:*

- *Increasing the pride of West German citizens in being German; Kohl believes that through loss of national pride the Germans have lost their moral center.*
- *Heading off impulses, which he sees particularly among educated youth, toward emphasizing German interests and values with limited regard for commitments to the Western Alliance and West European integration.*
- *Maintaining the SPD policies of good relations with the USSR and Eastern Europe while clearly reasserting the aspiration to reunification.* [ ]

make them uneasy. Government spokesmen complain about US failures of attention and coordination and about the absence of a "German lobby" in US politics. West German politicians of all parties make clear their reservations about a close bilateral partnership. We think they see it as antagonizing West Germany's European friends and drawing West Germany into commitments outside Europe. In addition, we believe they have become increasingly aware since the 1960s of the limits of US capacity to help West Germany overcome the defects of its national status. [ ]

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#### **European Cooperation**

Supranational cooperation in Western Europe—the promotion of European integration—continues to be Bonn's preferred way out of its national dilemma. Participation in the European Community occasionally has permitted Bonn to express its opposition to US trade policies, for example, without endangering the West German-US security relationship. And EC foreign policy consultation has made enough progress to give the Federal Republic a voice in issues about which it has felt limited freedom to assert itself unilaterally, such as the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the other hand, West German efforts to strengthen EC institutions, including its foreign policy consultations, have shown only limited success. [ ]

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West German determination for tangible progress on the European front, including in the defense sector, has increased markedly since the onset of INF deployments. Kohl sees expanded European cooperation—especially since it is supported by the SPD—as one way to repair the damage done by the INF debate to the longstanding consensus on security issues in West Germany. The French—fearful that neutralist nationalism was becoming dominant in West Germany—have taken the lead in advocating a revitalization of the WEU as a forum for promoting cooperation on European arms production and coordination of defense policy. In contrast to its response to similar overtures in the past, Bonn has reacted positively to the French initiative. Indeed, Genscher was one of the first advocates of foreign minister-level attendance at a meeting of WEU defense ministers planned for October. [ ]

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**Figure 6. Chancellor Kohl and French President Mitterrand. Pushing for progress on the European front.**



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**A Delicate Balancing Act.** The Kohl government's push for greater European cooperation is related to its simultaneous pursuit of improved intra-German relations. Kohl no doubt sees expanded European cooperation as a way both to cement West German ties with the West and to contain Western fears—particularly on the part of the French, and even by some conservatives in West Germany—of what might be going on in intra-German relations.

We believe, moreover, that any Allied expressions of suspicion over the Kohl government's intra-German policy would weaken domestic support for NATO, and we think the government has moved to head off such a chain reaction. For example, in early February, the CDU-affiliated Konrad Adenauer Foundation sponsored a conference on intra-German relations in Washington which was attended by high-level West Germans, including the Minister for Inner-German Relations. The conference, in the view of US observers who attended, was an obvious attempt to reassure Washington officials that recent and future developments in intra-German relations would not detract from Bonn's commitment to the West. Optimally, Bonn would like Allied declarations—such as the one issued following the 31 May NATO ministerial meeting in Washington—to continue to endorse positive developments in intra-German relations and the goal of eventual reunification.

#### **The Future: More Active Pursuit of "German Interests"**

Some of West Germany's new assertiveness may not last. For example, the heightened concerns about West Germany's limited sovereignty and fears of a superpower confrontation apparent during the long INF debate have abated to some extent. On the other hand, Bonn's more assertive stance in advancing "German interests" is rooted in more permanent factors and societal changes, including West Germany's real national power relative to its neighbors and the coming of age of generations with less regard for the constraints arising from the Second World War. This, we think, is unlikely to change.

Indeed, West Germany's recognition that it has its own national interests—and its readiness to pursue them—probably represents attainment of political maturity and a turn toward normalcy. Given that the West Germans remain among the least sympathetic of all Europeans to Communism as a social system, this development could help to tie West Germany even more firmly to the West, depending on how the Allies react to the West Germans as an equal partner.

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### **Efforts by the East To Exploit German Nationalism**

*While the Kohl government is seeking to defuse neutralist sentiment, the Soviets and East Germans—probably overestimating its magnitude—recently have sought to exploit it to derail implementation of NATO's INF modernization decision. In the fall of 1983, for example, according to press accounts [redacted] senior Soviet party officials hinted to West Germans, for the first time we know of since the 1950s, of possibilities for reunification and for a German resolution of Berlin's status. The Soviets' West German interlocutors—realizing that Moscow does not desire a reunified Germany—reportedly recognized the Soviet gestures for what little they were worth. [redacted]*

*Press reports indicate Honecker has also emphasized common German interests in apparent support of the Soviet anti-INF campaign and in order to keep Bonn's money flowing. The East Germans even have taken domestic measures that appear to loosen control. The East Berlin regime has reacted only slowly and in limited measure to its unauthorized peace movement. It let the Evangelical Church hold major rallies in connection with the "Luther year" in 1983, and it continues to dismantle some border fortifications to give the appearance of reducing life-threatening measures against illegal border crossers. Although no East German regime will allow relations with Bonn to reach the point where its own control and security are undermined, the current upbeat mood of intra-German relations in the aftermath of INF deployments appears not to accord totally with Soviet desires. The extent to which the Honecker regime's current opening to West Germany reflects domestic political impulses or Soviet manipulation is open to debate. [redacted]*

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We believe the extent of West German restiveness—and aggressiveness in pressing their case—will depend on the degree to which:

- Frustrations over domestic economic and socio-political problems make them more prickly in their foreign relations.

- West Germans view close association with the United States as advancing their security.
- West Germans perceive possibilities for progress in intra-German relations (if room for progress is perceived, they will be aggressive in exploiting it).
- West Germans perceive opportunities for intensified cooperation with their West European allies. [redacted]

Specific moves—some already under way—serve as indicators of the likely directions of West Germany's greater independence. They include:

- Further large loans to East European countries, including East Germany. The loans would have the dual purpose of supporting West German trade, industry, and financial institutions and of increasing the interdependence between West Germany and the Eastern countries.

- An increase in the West German role in arms control discussions with the Soviets, the East Germans, and the other Warsaw Pact countries. Bilateral discussions between West German and Eastern Bloc specialists on arms control took place in 1983. West Germany also is the ally that is pressing hardest for Western initiatives in multilateral East-West talks on confidence-building measures and arms control. All the major political parties share this interest. The West German Government's emphasis on confidence building is likely to limit West German interest in seeking to influence the East on other issues, such as human rights.

- An effort to overcome the formal limitations on West German sovereignty dating from the immediate postwar period. This could lead to proposals that would give Bonn the right to veto US transfer of military personnel and equipment through West Germany to zones of tension outside the NATO geographic area. In the shorter term, West Germany has requested—and probably will receive final approval before the end of this year—that the remaining constraints in the WEU treaty on West German conventional arms production be removed.

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Broader West German initiatives are possible in the next few years. Some will be directed, for example, toward further strengthening Bonn's voice in Washington or Europe's voice in NATO, especially regarding nuclear weapons. But they also could be directed toward further expanding the economic ties between West Berlin and East Germany as a step toward greater involvement by West Berlin and West Germany in determining West Berlin's future. Allied officials in West Berlin have interpreted meetings between West Berlin politicians and East German officials as pointing implicitly in such a direction. In German eyes, this would be a necessary condition for reestablishing sovereignty and setting "German control of Germany's fate."

Major programs of national assertiveness, we conclude, would almost certainly be directed toward improving relations with the East, with an eye to finding a palatable solution to the problem of a divided Germany. This assertiveness also would aim at achieving either greater independence of the United States or partnership on more equal terms with it. Such programs would require considered tactics and sustained efforts—as was the case with Brandt's Eastern policy. A conservative government would start with one advantage—it probably would have the support of the political opposition. But, it might have to overcome significant internal differences among its own constituents before it could maintain any such program.

While not sharing the more alarmist views evident particularly in France, we believe that developments in intra-German relations need to be monitored carefully. The Kohl government does not appear to have an overall concept as to how to conduct the relationship, but rather appears to be taking advantage of situations as they arise. Its eagerness to expand this relationship—and the fact that the East German regime understands this—makes it likely that the West Germans will give much more than they receive.

Although West German concessions are most certain in the economic area, to an increasing extent they may entail political equities. For example, meetings in East Berlin between West German (including West Berlin) and East German officials raise status questions involving the Allies in that they weaken the



Figure 7. Illustrating the West Germans' Feeling of Helplessness. "Things are not all bad. One forest is dying (from acid rain), but another is taking its place."

Der Spiegel ©

Western position that East Berlin is not the capital of East Germany. Along similar lines, the West Germans are considering formalized relations between the Bundestag and the East German Volkskammer, which meets in East Berlin and—in violation of postwar Allied agreements—includes deputies directly elected from East Berlin. These West German actions are significant departures from past policy even though it is difficult to determine how they would result in real impairment of the Allied position in Berlin. The West Germans also may compromise on two of East Germany's most basic political demands—adjustment of the Elbe River border and

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closure of the Salzgitter center which documents East German human rights violations. This would have been politically unthinkable only a few years ago.

Although Kohl has no intention of allowing his pursuit of improved intra-German relations to interfere with West Germany's NATO responsibilities, the momentum of the intra-German relationship raises the political costs of breaking it off. This could lead to a weakening of West German support for certain Alliance policies, especially if Bonn questions their importance. For example, the Kohl government already has opposed the Air-Land Battle 2000 strategy—an Alliance issue Bonn perceives as considerably less important than INF—on the grounds that it would cause public relations problems in West Germany because it is viewed as an offensive strategy and would entail fighting on East German territory.

The continued contradiction between West Germany's increasing national power and the constraints on its sovereignty—historical, economic, and military—also could lead to future problems for the Alliance. We believe the greatest danger would be posed if the West Germans came to consider themselves isolated from their Western partners (see inset, "An example of West German Sensitivity to Isolation"). This could occur if West Germans came to believe that NATO or the European Community were ignoring German economic and security interests. A substantial increase in intra-Alliance or intra-EC protectionism that hurt the West German economy could be such an instance. NATO blindness to increased West German sensitivity regarding war damage to the eastern half of the country could be another. To date, the West Germans have not felt themselves isolated on any important issue. For example, on the US-West European rift over the Siberian pipeline, they were allied with the British, French, and Italians.

If West Germany should become alienated to this extent, we think the danger to the Alliance is not so much that Bonn will look toward the East, but rather that the legitimacy of the West German political system could be undermined as the people come to question the effectiveness of their leaders in furthering "German interests." The risks could grow over time as West Germans become even less sensitive to the constraints imposed on their country by its past.

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### *An Example of West German Sensitivity to Isolation*

*Prior to this year's London Economic Summit, Chancellor Kohl was forced to deny, once the story became public, that he had been excluded from the ceremony at Normandy commemorating the 40th anniversary of the D-day invasion. Kohl had hoped to be invited as a further sign of West Germany's complete acceptance by the West, and feelers were sent out to Paris. But the French, partly out of opposition from some domestic groups, refused to invite him.*

*The rebuff to Kohl spawned considerable nationalistic commentary. Foreign Ministry State Secretary Alois Mertes, a conservative Christian Democrat, warned that the D-day commemoration could turn into "a day of alienation between Germany and its Allies" if they generated the feeling in West Germany that "Germans were a vanquished people or a nation of guilty men between East and West." He added that the only beneficiaries would be pacifists and neutralists who seek a "special German role between East and West." At the other end of the political spectrum, a Green Party member stated that "the exclusion of the Germans from the celebrations leaves the impression that this was a war not only against Fascism, but against Germany." A young student added, "Of course it was good that the British and the Americans and the French came and ended what was going on. But now we are Allies. We are not accepted as Allies, but we are still occupied."*

*French President Mitterrand did recognize the German sensitivities during the commemoration. In his speech, he was careful to distinguish between present-day Germany and the regime the Allies had fought. Moreover, Mitterrand and Kohl agreed to a joint commemoration later this year of French and German casualties at Verdun.*

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West Germany will need a continued string of talented politicians and diplomats to explain to new voters why West Germany must shoulder the greatest burden in the European Community and permit large

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stocks of nuclear weapons on their territory if Washington, Paris, and London increasingly are perceived as falling short of accommodating West Germany's particular problems, interests, and limitations. [redacted]

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To an extent, the rise of the peace movement and Greens in West Germany, as well as the disorder within the SPD, are a manifestation of this legitimacy crisis and should serve as an advance warning of what can happen. In those states such as Hesse and Hamburg, where the Greens have replaced the FDP as the third-largest party and hold (or have held) the balance of power, the formation of stable and predictable governments has been impossible. A similar situation could arise at the national level at some point in the future. [redacted]

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The Kohl government's strong pressure for arms control talks indicates that it is sensitive to these internal pressures. In the short term, if a West German government came to believe that the West (both the United States and Western Europe) was ignoring its most fundamental interests—and that this was having negative political and economic repercussions within West Germany—it may choose to play on the West's fears of Germany's perceived "historical orientation toward the East" long enough to get everyone's attention. Ironically, a conservative government might be more likely to pursue such a course because of its lesser vulnerability to the charge that it was jeopardizing West Germany's relationship with NATO and the EC. [redacted]

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The continued division of Germany ensures that the "German Problem" will not be settled any time soon. Indeed, West Germany will be subject to strong conflicting pressures, as it is the "big prize" in the struggle between East and West. Influencing the Federal Republic and its relations with the West will continue to be the top priority of Soviet policy toward Western Europe. For the time being, all indications are that West Germany is politically stable and remains firmly rooted in the West. West German attitudes and society are changing, however, and its longer term stability and complete fidelity to NATO are likely to depend on the Allies' ability to adjust to Bonn's more self-interested stance and to limit Soviet opportunities for seductive meddling. [redacted]

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